REMARKS

Claims 11-22 are pending in the present patent application. Claims 11-22 stand rejected. This application continues to include claims 11-22.

Claims 11-22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Hall, U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0138614 A1, (hereinafter, Hall). Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejection of claims 11-22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) in view of the following.

Hall is directed to a method and apparatus to manage the dynamic assignment of network addresses (paragraph 0012). One embodiment includes a client proxy that resides on a device, referred to as a network gateway, that provides access to a network (paragraph 0012). The client proxy is capable of receiving a request for assignment of a network address from a client, procuring the network address on behalf of the client from a network address provider, and managing use of the network address for the client (paragraph 0012).

A process 300, executed by a processor 202, performs the programming logic for steps 302-312 of Fig, 3, wherein a request for a secure connection is received at block 302, a secure connection is initiated at block 304, and a determination is made as to whether a recognized protocol is making the request for a secure connection at block 306 (paragraph 0031). If the protocol is not recognized, the processing logic ends, otherwise, a network address is requested from a network address provider at block 308, a determination is made as to whether a valid network address has been returned at block 310, and if there was no valid network address returned, the processing logic ends, whereas if a valid network address is returned, the process for creating a secure connection continues at block 312 (paragraph 0031).

Applicants believe that claims 11-22 patentably define Applicants' invention over Hall, for at least the reasons set forth below.

Claim 11 is directed to a method of communicating with a shared imaging apparatus connected to a computer network, wherein communication over said network is facilitated through use of network packets.

Claim 11 recites, in part, providing said shared imaging apparatus with networking hardware; and providing said shared imaging apparatus with imaging apparatus firmware.

Applicants respectfully submit that Hall does not disclose, teach, or suggest providing a shared imaging apparatus with networking hardware; and providing the shared imaging apparatus with imaging apparatus firmware, as recited in claim 11.

For example, Hall discloses one embodiment wherein a network 102 may include a client 106, a client 108, and a gateway 110, all capable of communicating information over a communication links 112, wherein clients 106 and 108 may be personal computers, and gateway 110 may be a network node capable of connecting clients 106 and 108 with network 116 over communications link 114 (paragraph 0016, Fig. 1).

However, Hall does not disclose, teach, or suggest that clients 106 and 108 are a shared imaging apparatus, or that clients 106 and 108 include imaging apparatus firmware. Rather, Hall discloses that clients 106 and 108 may be personal computers.

In addition, gateway 116 is not a shared imaging apparatus, and is not disclosed, taught or suggested as having imaging apparatus firmware. Rather, gateway 116 is a network gateway that provides access to a network (paragraph 0012).

Hall also discloses a system 200 that includes a processor 202, an input/output (I/O) adapter 204, an operator interface 206, a memory 210 and a disk storage 218 (paragraph 0022,

Fig. 2). However, the Hall written description and drawings do not disclose, teach, or suggest that system 200 is a shared imaging apparatus or that system 200 includes imaging apparatus firmware. Rather, system 200 is a network node such as a VPN gateway (paragraph 0022), which is a network gateway that provides access to a network (paragraph 0012).

Accordingly, Hall does not disclose, teach, or suggest providing a shared imaging apparatus with networking hardware; and providing the shared imaging apparatus with imaging apparatus firmware, as recited in claim 11.

Claim 11 also recites defining a data channel associated with said networking hardware; instructing said networking hardware to accept information on said data channel from a user that owns said data channel; processing automatic Internet Protocol (IP) address negotiation network packets with said imaging apparatus firmware when said data channel is not owned; and processing second types of network packets, different from said automatic IP address negotiation network packets, by said networking hardware of said shared imaging apparatus when said data channel is owned.

In contrast to claim 11, Hall discloses that processor 202, performs the programming logic for steps 302-312 of Fig, 3. A request for a secure connection is received at block 302, a secure connection is initiated at block 304, and a determination is made as to whether a recognized protocol is making the request for a secure connection at block 306 (paragraph 0031). If the protocol is not recognized, the processing logic ends, otherwise, a network address is requested from a network address provider at block 308, a determination is made as to whether a valid network address has been returned at block 310, and if there was no valid network address returned, the processing logic ends, whereas if a valid network address is returned, the process for creating a secure connection continues at block 312 (paragraph 0031).

Thus, although the Hall method acts upon a request for a secure connection and may obtain a network address, Hall does not disclose, teach, or suggest instructing the networking hardware to accept information on the data channel from a user that owns the data channel; processing automatic Internet Protocol (IP) address negotiation network packets with the imaging apparatus firmware when the data channel is not owned; and processing second types of network packets, different from the automatic IP address negotiation network packets, by the networking hardware of the shared imaging apparatus when the data channel is owned.

That is, Hall does not disclose, teach, or suggest that networking hardware is instructed to accept information on a channel from a user that owns the channel, and processing IP address negotiation network packets <u>when the channel *is not* owned</u>, and processing second types of network packets different from the automatic IP address negotiation network packets, <u>when the channel *is* owned</u>.

Hall simply does not disclose, teach, or suggest processing different types of network packets <u>based on whether a data channel is or is not owned</u>, in the manner recited in claim 11.

Although Hall paragraphs 0035-0036 disclose that a client proxy module is configured to request an assignment of an IP address from a network address provider in accordance with a network address assignment protocol, and that a single client proxy may be configured to receive requests for secure virtual connections that may be communicated using any number of recognized protocols that may differ from the assignment protocol used by a particular private network, this does not in any manner disclose, teach, or suggest processing different types of network packets <u>based on whether a data channel is or is not owned</u>, as recited in claim 11.

Hall also discloses that in addition to the requested IP address, the client proxy may also receive other information associated with the IP address, for example, the client proxy may receive an assignment identifier with the IP address (paragraph 0037).

However, Applicants respectfully submit that whether a client proxy may receive other information associated with the IP address, e.g., an assignment identifier with the IP address, this or the balance of the Hall disclosure does not in any manner disclose, teach, or suggest processing different types of network packets based on whether a data channel is or is not owned, and hence does not disclose, teach, or suggest processing automatic Internet Protocol (IP) address negotiation network packets with the imaging apparatus firmware when the data channel is not owned; and processing second types of network packets, different from the automatic IP address negotiation network packets, by the networking hardware of the shared imaging apparatus when the data channel is owned, as recited in claim 11.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Hall does not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claim 11.

Claim 11 is thus believed allowable in its present form.

Claims 12-22 are believed allowable due to their dependence, directly or indirectly, on otherwise allowable base claim 11. In addition, claims 12-22 further and patentably define the invention over Hall.

For example, claim 13 is directed to the method of claim 11, wherein when said data channel is not owned, then determining whether to place said shared imaging apparatus in an automatic IP address negotiation state, and if said shared imaging apparatus is placed in said automatic IP address negotiation state, then attempting to automatically assign an IP address to said shared imaging apparatus.

Hall paragraphs 0033 and 0036-0039 are relied upon in rejecting the subject matter of claim 13. However, paragraph 0033 pertains to a time for which a client may use a network address, and paragraphs 0036-0039 pertain to obtaining an IP address for a client, without in any manner disclosing, teaching or suggesting any determination as to whether to place a shared imaging apparatus in an automatic IP address negotiation state, and if so, attempting to automatically assign an IP address to the shared imaging apparatus, as recited in claim 11.

For example, the Hall clients are computers, and are not shared imaging apparatuses. In addition, the Hall client proxy module resides in a program partition 212 of a gateway (paragraph 0034), which is not a shared imaging apparatus, but rather, is a network gateway that provides access to a network (paragraph 0012). Further, Hall does not disclose, teach, or suggest that the client proxy module determines whether to place a shared imaging apparatus in an automatic IP address negotiation state, *and if so*, attempts to automatically assign an IP address to the shared imaging apparatus, as recited in claim 11.

Accordingly, claim 13 is believed allowable in its own right.

Claim 18 is directed to the method of claim 11, wherein when said data channel is not owned, then determining whether to place said shared imaging apparatus in an automatic Internet Protocol (IP) address negotiation state, and if said shared imaging apparatus is placed in said automatic IP address negotiation state, then attempting to automatically renew a current IP address for said shared imaging apparatus.

Claim 18 is believed allowable in its own right for substantially the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 13.

Claim 20 is directed to the method of claim 11, wherein when said shared imaging apparatus is in an idle state, then determining whether to place said shared imaging apparatus in

an automatic Internet Protocol (IP) address negotiation state, and if said shared imaging apparatus is placed in said automatic IP address negotiation state, then attempting to automatically assign an IP address for said shared imaging apparatus.

Claim 20 is believed allowable in its own right for substantially the same reasons as set forth above with respect to claim 13.

In addition, Hall simply does not disclose, teach, or suggest making any determinations based on whether a shared imaging apparatus is in an idle state, as recited in claim 20.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully submit that Hall does not disclose, teach, or suggest the subject matter of claims 11-22. Claims 11-22 are thus believed allowable in their present respective forms, and Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claims 11-22 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e).

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that no combination of the cited references teaches, discloses or suggests the subject matter of the pending claims. The pending claims are therefore in condition for allowance, and Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the claims.

In the event Applicants have overlooked the need for an extension of time, an additional extension of time, payment of fee, or additional payment of fee, Applicants hereby conditionally petition therefor and authorize that any charges be made to Deposit Account No. 20-0095, TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.

Should any question concerning any of the foregoing arise, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (317) 894-0801.

Respectfully submitted,

/Paul C. Gosnell/

Paul C. Gosnell
Registration No. 46,735

Attorney for Applicants

RKA14/ts

TAYLOR & AUST, P.C.   Electronically Filed: October 26, 2007
12029 E. Washington Street
Indianapolis, IN 46229
Telephone: 317-894-0801
Facsimile: 317-894-0803